

HOW TO SELL

# Fountain PENS

and MECHANICAL PENCILS



Manual Number 4

A PRODUCT INFORMATION STUDY

by the

**NATIONAL STATIONERS ASSOCIATION**

WASHINGTON, D. C.

# *This* REPORT

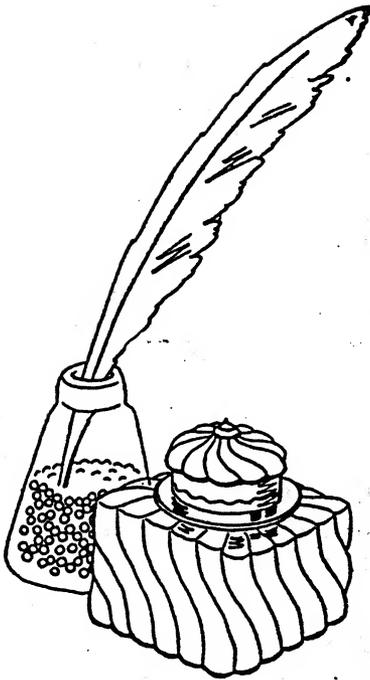
was compiled and published by the National Stationers Association to assist the stationery salesman in discovering and satisfying the writing instrument needs of his customers.

The ideas and information were collected through the cooperation of member pen and mechanical pencil manufacturers, member stationers, and their successful salesmen.



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## The Pen and Ancient Egypt

The history of writing instruments is the history of man. Both stories begin when man first tried to put down his thoughts for other men to understand. With his fingers he traced symbols in the sand and clay and with sharp sticks and flint he carved curious hieroglyphics on the damp walls of his cave.

Tracing any modern device to its modest beginning thrills one with the romance of the centuries and often nips our modern pride when we find that the ancients, too, were capable of ingenious thinking. We consider the fountain pen as a child of the late nineteenth century, and yet historians tell us that the Egyptians, 4000 years B.C., used a "fountain pen" made of a hollow stem fitted on one end with a piece of copper very similar to the modern pen nib. Early Romans made their calamus or arundo from bamboo and reed, cutting the forward part into a nib and pouring writing fluid into the stem. Adhesion regulated the flow and the reed was squeezed whenever more fluid was needed. A bronze pen point found in the ruins of Pompeii showed that the Romans were familiar with the pen as well as the stylus. A Bavarian technician, Daniel Schwenter, wrote about the vacuum principle of a fountain pen in his book published in 1651, but its practical use did not develop until over two centuries later.

The familiar quill pen came along as early as the seventh century. Quills from the feathers of large birds like the swan, goose and turkey were split to form a nib which metered the fluid to the writing surface. The name, "Pen," in fact, comes from the Latin term "penna," meaning "feather." Smaller pens were made from crows' quills, and the artist today still enters your store and calls for a "crow quill" pen. The hollow quills acted as reservoirs to hold the ink in contact with the nib.

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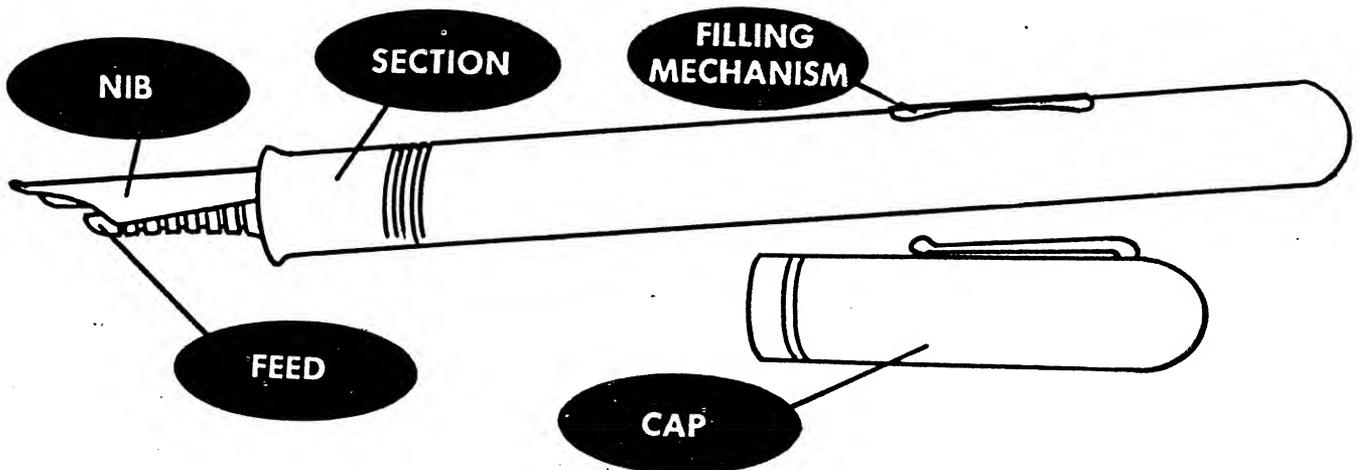
Quill pens were fine instruments, contrary to popular belief. They were prepared by expert craftsmen, quill dressers and cutters, with their "pen knives." But they were fragile and re-

quired the services of the itinerant quill craftsman or the "stationer" who stationed his cart at a central location and re-pointed quills while selling his paper, ink, and dusting sand.

The transition from the quill to steel began in the seventeenth century. The quill held its own in competition, however, for nearly another century. Even when the metal nib was accepted, habit and custom still retained the quill holder. But the metal proved more satisfactory because it was more durable, could be split more accurately to provide a uniform metering of ink, and the tip could be rounded for smoother writing.

Hardly had the quills given way to the metal pen than the fountain pen appeared to overcome the dip pen's limited ink storage. Old timers knew it was just a fad, however, and the leaky, ill-fitting, scratchy models backed up their belief. In the 1880's, the fountain pen salesmen were their own manufacturers, carrying pens around, making a few sales to friends and out-of-town customers. But these pioneers didn't give up easily. The fountain pen took hold and the millions spent on research over the comparatively few years since the lowly quill held sway, have produced the precision instrument you sell today.

## What Is a Pen?



There are hundreds of pen designs on today's market. Within the individual differences of the brands lie the claims to superiority and the selling features of the pens you sell. Study the

literature furnished by the manufacturers and the words of their salesmen, for the field is highly competitive.

The development of the modern pen presents

a rich story of merchandising and engineering achievement equalled by few product lines. If you are a lover of success stories and sales achievement, dig into the romance of the pen. Since it adds little to the selling angle, however, we must reluctantly set it aside and talk about the present day pen and mechanical pencil.

Although the specific features of the fountain pen vary with the manufacturer, the basic functions are primarily the same. If you understand the principal purposes of the typical pen parts, you can comprehend with greater ease the selling features outlined by the manufacturers for their individual promotion. The illustrations which follow are in most cases much simplified and do not pretend to show all the working parts of any one pen. You can get complete mechanical descriptions of the pens you sell from the manufacturers.

Principal parts of the modern pen are:

1. RESERVOIR
2. FILLING MECHANISM
3. SECTION
4. FEED
5. NIB
6. CAP

## The Reservoir

The reservoir may be the barrel of the pen itself or a rubber or plastic sac within the barrel attached to the feed.

## The Filling Mechanism

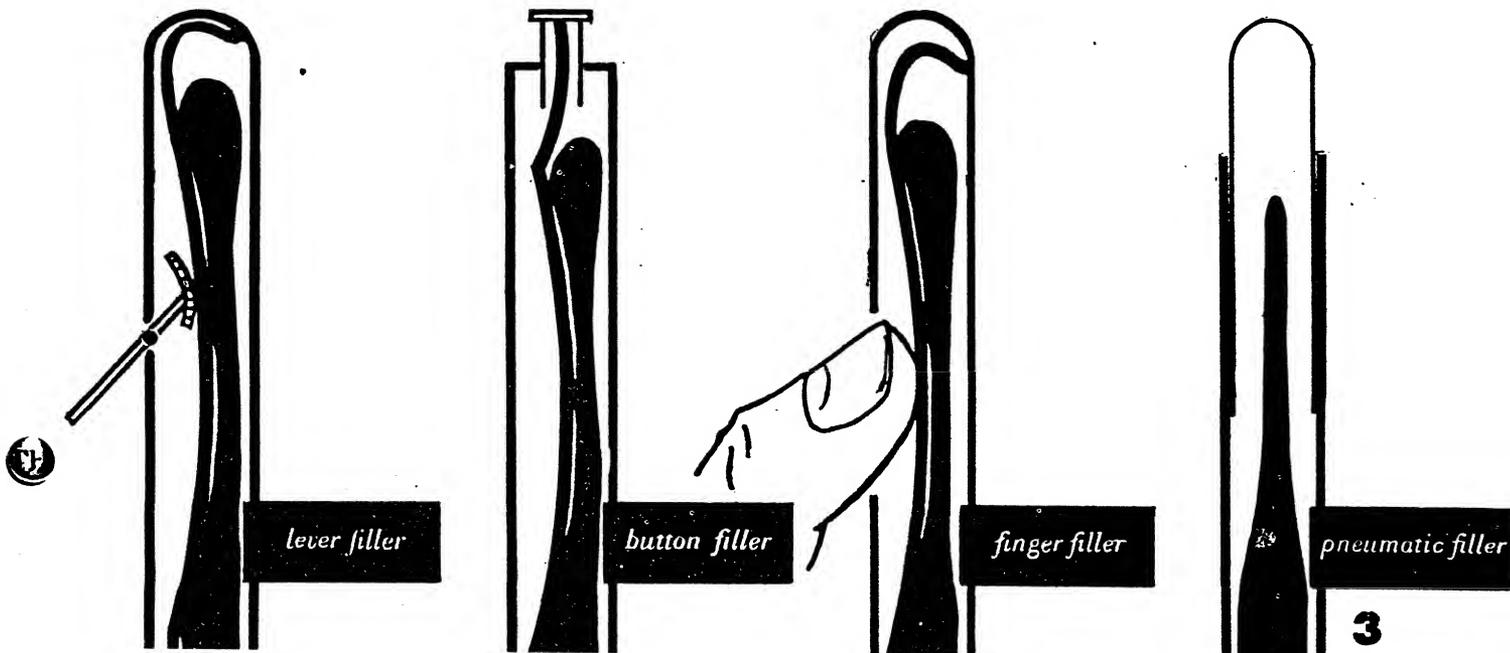
At the present time there are three primary filling principles in use: 1. Flexible sac; 2. Diaphragm; and 3. Plunger.

### Flexible Sac

By far the most popular method for filling a pen is a system for compressing and releasing a resilient sac housing the writing fluid. Several popular pens which have used the other two methods have returned to the sac at the present writing. The sac can be compressed in four primary fashions: 1. Lever; 2. Button; 3. Finger; and 4. Pneumatic.

*The lever fill*, called the "conventional" method, is used by the majority of pens. When the lever is lifted it forces a pressure bar against the sac, expelling the air and ink. When the lever is released, the sac returns to its normal shape, creating a vacuum which attracts a fresh supply of ink. The shape of the pressure bar, the action parts of the lever, the size and material of the sac, all form selling differences from pen to pen.

*The button filler* is quite similar to the lever fill in its action on the sac. When the button is pressed, a pressure bar is distorted so that it presses against the sac with the same results as with the lever filler. The button filler permits the use of a closed barrel which prevents leaking



should the sac be ruptured, providing, of course, that the cap is on tight.

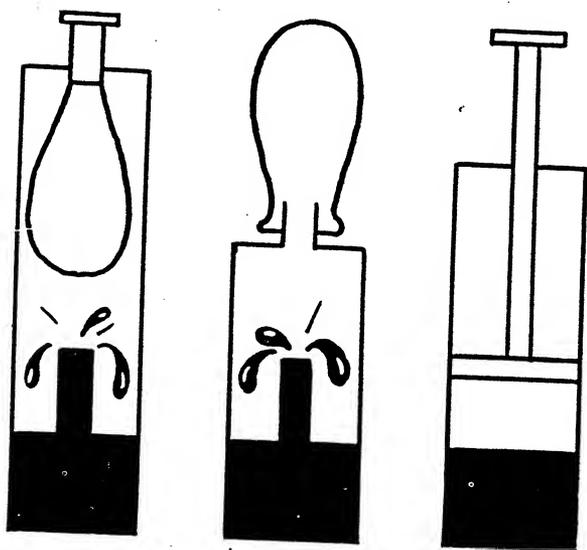
In the *finger filler*, the sac is depressed through a cut-out in the inner barrel with the finger. When in use, the sac is covered with the outer barrel or barrel cap.

The *pneumatic filler* makes use of air pressure to depress the sac. As the plunger, a hollow tube, is pressed down it compresses the air about the sac which in turn expells the contents of the sac. When the plunger reaches the end of the stroke, air enters to equalize the pressure and the sac returns to normal, filling with ink.

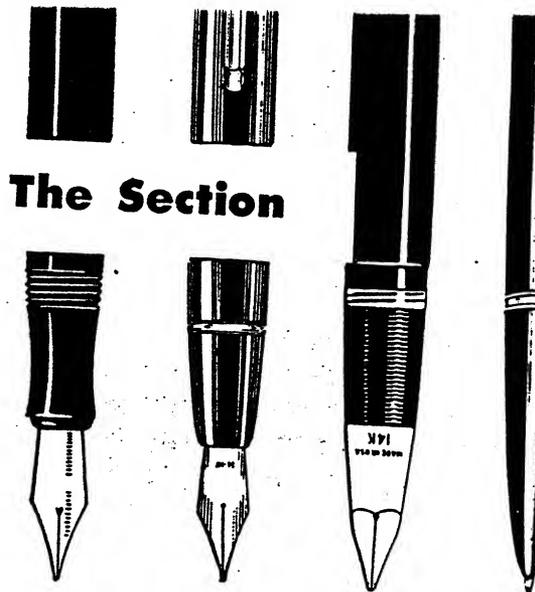
### Diaphragm and Plunger

The diaphragm and plunger filling devices are used without an internal ink sac, using the barrel itself for the reservoir. In the *diaphragm devices*, a resilient sac is alternately expanded and compressed to alter the air pressure within the reservoir. The ink enters through a filler tube extending well within the reservoir so that the air may leave without taking ink with it.

The *plunger filler* works much like a physician's



syringe. The upstroke of the plunger pulls ink into the reservoir. Bypass channels and a flexible washer combine to allow the ink to be retained on the downstroke.

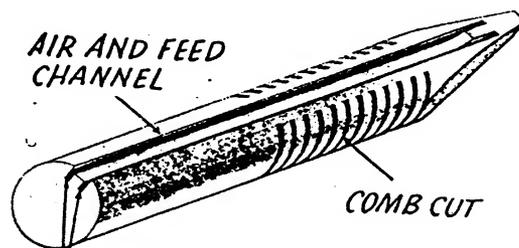


The section holds the feed and nib together and joins them to the barrel. The conventional section has a flattened end to meet head-on with the inner cap explained later. The streamlined version curves smoothly to the nib, relying on the tapered sides to fit the inner cap where it is used.

A recent change in pen design is the hooded section. In this style, the section extends over the nib to step up the streamlined appearance. Some hooded sections include capillary cuts in the under side to assist the feed. Some pens utilize large, cylindrical nibs which achieve the same streamlined beauty and add strength to the nib itself.

### The Feed

The feed and the nib work together to meter the ink to the paper. The ink must start flowing as soon as the nib touches the paper, must continue to flow evenly, and must not flood out to cause exasperating blots on the paper or smudges on the fingers. The feed is responsible for maintaining a balanced flow and its design is the result of many years of experimenting and research by the individual pen companies. Before we talk about the feed design, let's see how a typical pen functions, bearing in mind always that each marketed pen has patented designs meant to improve on its competitor. The good salesman is aware of these small but important selling features.

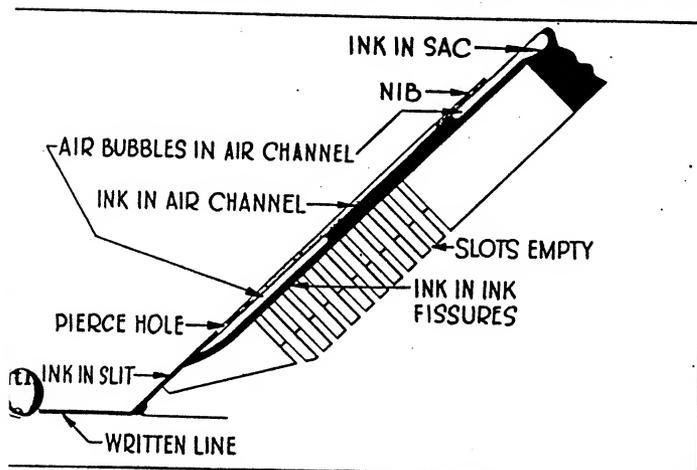


## Capillarity Capitalized

The application of the principle of capillarity elevated the pen from an object of ridicule to respectability and turned it into a marvel of mechanical simplicity. There are no faucets to turn and no switches to click and yet the ink starts flowing at the touch of paper and stops the instant the point leaves the surface. It flows up or down with little regard for gravity!

### Here's How It Works

Getting scientific for just a moment, here's how the engineers explain it (and for Heaven's sake, don't try to sell a pen by explaining this to a customer!): When the nib touches the



paper, adhesion (molecular attraction of unlike molecules) pulls a column of ink from the nib to the paper. Cohesion (molecular attraction of like molecules) pulls more ink down from the reservoir and through the feed to the nib. When the ink is used, the pressure inside the pen is reduced and air bubbles slip in to equalize the pressure again. Capillarity (elevation of the surface of a liquid when in contact with a solid) causes the ink to creep between the cuts and grooves in the nib and feed so that the column of ink is always in starting position at the tip of the nib and continues without break to the reservoir. Whew!

### The Controlled Leak

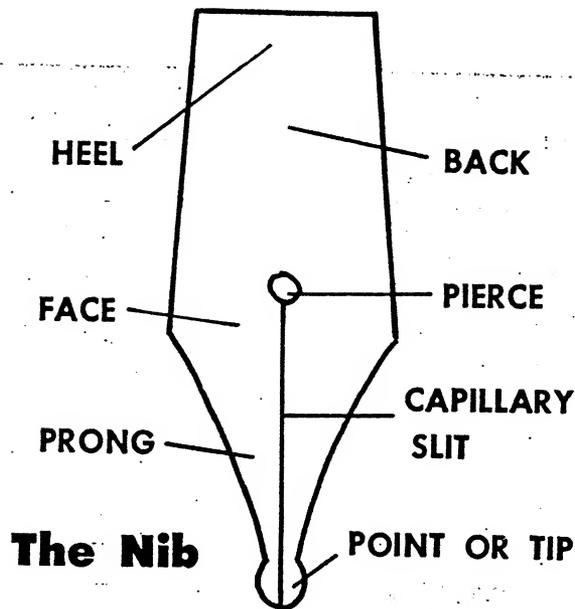
A cross-section of a typical feed shows the ink fissures and channel. The ink fissures run along under the nib until they reach the point, then bob up just below the pierce hole to contact the nib, allowing the ink to continue along the capillary nib slit to the paper. No contact—no flow. Most of the air returns through the pierce hole, and into the reservoir by way of the

channel to equalize the pressure. If this channel should become clogged, the pen cannot function. Some pens have additional means for the air return.

The material used in the feed is compounded for capillarity, wettability, and dimensional stability.

If the atmospheric pressure decreases because of an increase in altitude or if the pressure inside the sac increases because of a rise in temperature (even the heat of the hand), the inside air pressure forces the ink out toward the nib. To overcome flooding from this action, cross cuts, side cuts, fins or comb cuts are added to the feed to absorb the surge of fluid. After the pen is used for awhile, this excess ink is used up, clearing the way for any later overflow. These devices also hold enough ink to keep the supply uniform should the flow be interrupted by air bubbles. The ink that writes first actually comes from the feed and not the reservoir. The size of the sac must be matched to the feed design. Too large a sac may overload the comb cuts.

### Get to the Point



In the camera it's the lens; in a fountain pen it's the point that is the focal point of its worth. The quality and beauty of the barrel, and the dependable action of the feed, are important factors of course. But if the point, or "nib" as the experts call it, does not fit the customer, the pen is wrong.

## Let's Think About



INK

**G**ood quality ink must be used in a pen or the best engineered features are of no avail. A separate study in this series will deal with inks in greater detail, but here are a few pointers you should know especially about fountain pen inks.

When tests are made of fountain pen inks, here are factors that are considered. A good ink will have a happy balance in all desirable qualities.

1. Resists water and light if marked "Permanent"
2. Easily removed with water and soap if marked "Washable"
3. Flows smoothly and evenly
4. Dries quickly
5. Maintains even lines without "feathering"
6. Does not smudge or offset
7. Does not strike through the paper to obscure writing on the other side
8. Stable against decomposition, sediment, and clogging
9. Does not corrode steel pens excessively or deteriorate as a result of their use
10. Uniform in color from bottle to bottle

Blue-black, blue, and black are the favorite colors, although brilliant colors that harmonize or contrast with social stationery are available to fit every mood or occasion.

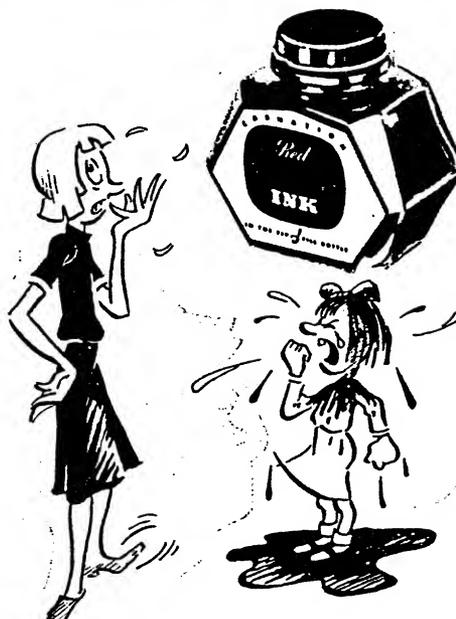
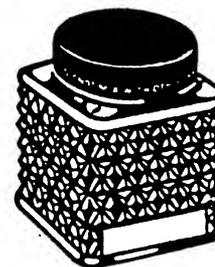
### Permanent vs. Washable

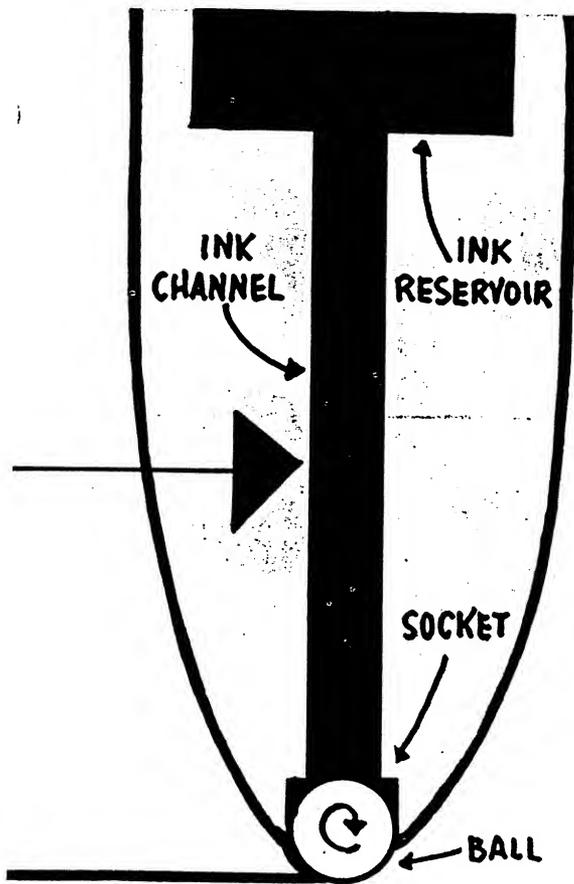
For normal use, and especially around the home, the washable inks are in greater demand. The term, "washable" is sometimes confusing to the customer because when used with fabrics it means that they can be washed without color loss. In inks, however, the opposite is meant—the ink CAN be removed by washing. School children, especially, should use the washable types.

For bookkeeping records and other types of writing that must be preserved for long periods of time and needs to resist the action of water in case of fire or flood, the permanent type of ink should be recommended.

So you will find the office man who uses washable ink in his fountain pen and permanent ink in his desk set. He's either smart or his stationer has done a good selling job.

You don't need to be much of a chemist to realize that inks should not be mixed unless you're looking for an obnoxious concoction of sludge, sediment, and dull color. Just take our word for it that your customer will be happier with his pen if he uses fresh, clean ink.





## The Ball Point

Although cartridge pens appeared from time to time, the business world is still agog over the spectacular sales promotion circus caused by the ball-point pen. After a sales slump caused by public disappointment in early models, business reports now show that the improvements in design, ball finish, and ink have caused a revival in demand which indicates that the ball point is here to stay.

The principle of the ball point is simple, but getting it to work is another problem that has racked the best brains in the industry. The low cost of the ball point belies the extreme accuracy necessary in its manufacture.

A tiny ball of steel, varying slightly in size among models but usually one millimeter in diameter, is swedged into a socket. The socket is connected by channels to the ink supply. The

ball must revolve freely in the socket and yet be tight enough to keep back excess ink. As it is dragged across any surface, friction causes it to turn, wiping ink from the channels and depositing it on the surface.

## Feeding the Ball

Feeds are primarily of two types, capillary action and pressure. Capillary action reservoirs are open-end tubes filled with a heavy ink like printer's ink. The viscosity of the ink must be carefully matched to the size of the ball, socket, and channels. All air pockets which would stop the capillary action must be removed by whirling or some other means. Although the tube may be covered for protection, access to the outside air must be provided to prevent air locks. The design and number of capillary tubes leading to the ball socket varies with manufacturers.

In the pressure-feed types, the ink is contained in a sac like the fountain pen and held under pressure by a spring mechanism.

The barrel, cap and clip of the ball point are similar to the standard fountain pen. Some models have retractable writing units. The entire writing mechanism is contained in the cartridge which is replaced when empty or when it fails to function. The low cost of replacement makes repairs impractical.

Replacement cartridges are rarely interchangeable. Because of the low cost of the pen body, the cartridge has become the profit item in a manner similar to the razor and blade business.



# The Mechanical Pencil

**Get the Lead Out!**



Mechanical pencils have aligned themselves into two main categories on today's market: turn or push. The turn or screw styles move the lead by twisting some part of the pencil. The push type moves the lead by pressing a button on the cap or the whole cap itself.

Turn styles are of three types, propel, propel-repel, and propel-repel-expel. The propel pencil uses a piston to propel the lead outward but it must be pushed back by hand. The propel-repel styles have a clutch which grips the lead, allowing it to retract as well as propel. The propel-repel-expel model has an added ejector which pushes the lead from the clutch on the last few turns.

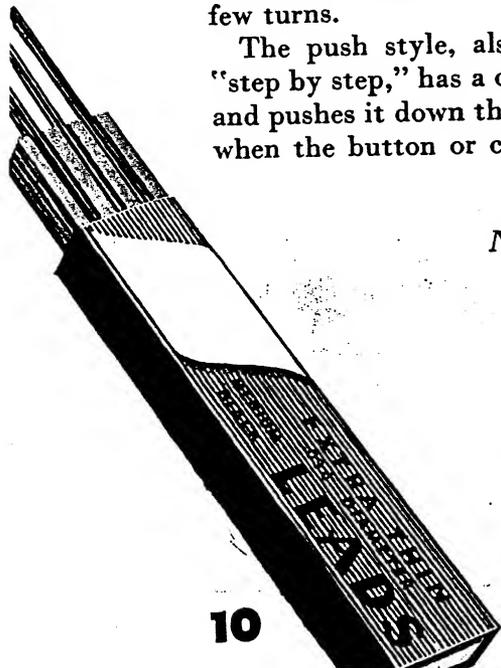
The push style, also called "repeater" and "step by step," has a collet which grips the lead and pushes it down the barrel, releasing its grip when the button or cap is pushed all the way

down. When the pressure is released, the open collet moves back to grip the lead a short distance above the previous position. Repel must be done by hand with the button or cap action depressed. Feeding of the lead is automatic. As one lead is used, another drops into the feed mechanism from the hopper.

Leads for mechanical pencils are normally of two thicknesses, .036 for "thin" and .046 for "thick."

Push type pencils use the thin lead in short lengths,  $1\frac{3}{8}$  inches. Propel type pencils use longer lengths,  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches in the thin and 4 inches in the thick diameters.

Choice of hardness is available as for wood case pencils but on a less extensive scale. Here are the standard designations and their description:



*Number*

- ...
- 1
- $1\frac{1}{2}$
- 2
- $2\frac{1}{2}$
- 3
- $3\frac{1}{2}$
- 4
- $4\frac{1}{2}$

*Symbol*

- 3B
- 2B
- B
- HB
- F
- H
- 2H
- 3H
- 4H

*Hardness*

- EXTRA SOFT
- SOFT
- MEDIUM SOFT
- MEDIUM
- FIRM
- MEDIUM HARD
- HARD
- VERY HARD
- EXTRA HARD

## Who Uses What Lead ?

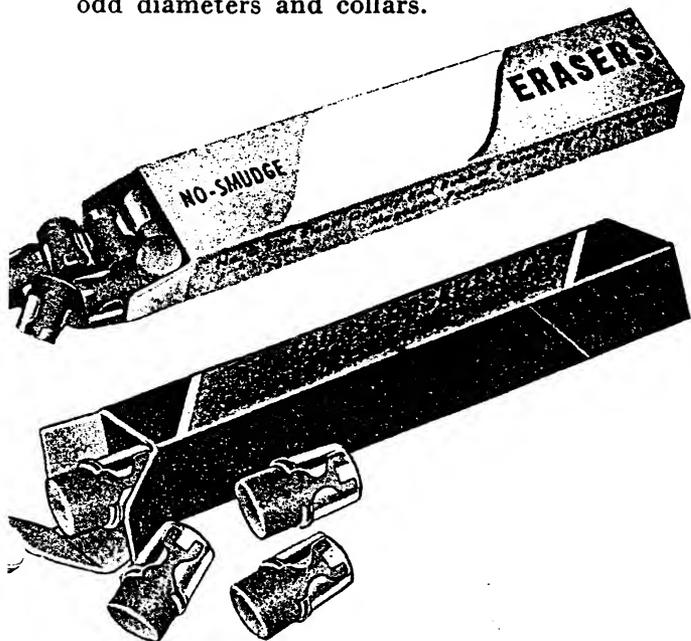
Pencils usually are sold with HB lead. If the customer asks for a lead refill for a particular pencil without stating the hardness desired, ask, "A medium lead like the one that came with the pencil?" Obviously you must know the kind of pencil used to determine the length and diameter of the lead. Manufacturers furnish charts that will help you here, but be sure you know the kind of lead that fits the pencils you stock.

A choice of colors is also available, more popular being red, blue, green, yellow, purple, silver, gold, and indelible. Yellow is popular for marking blueprints and photostats because it can be read in both the light and dark areas.

Dissatisfaction with a pencil often stems from using the wrong type of lead. Bold writers, editors, and artists like the soft lead. Fast writers and stenographers like the medium soft. The average writer prefers the medium and firm. Sales clerks using carbons need the medium hard and hard leads. Accountants who write small figures, draftsmen, and layout artists use the harder grades. A little study on your part on the lead requirements of the firms you call on will do much to win their favor.

## Erasers

Most mechanical pencils today provide for eraser refills. There is some standardization, but best results come from using the manufacturers' refills to save time fumbling through a box of odd diameters and collars.



## Other Styles

In addition to the standard types of mechanical pencils, there are specialty lines and novelty types in abundance.

The special types include drafting and marking pencils, using thicker leads and crayons. The thicker lead types may use a manually operated chuck instead of the standard mechanism.

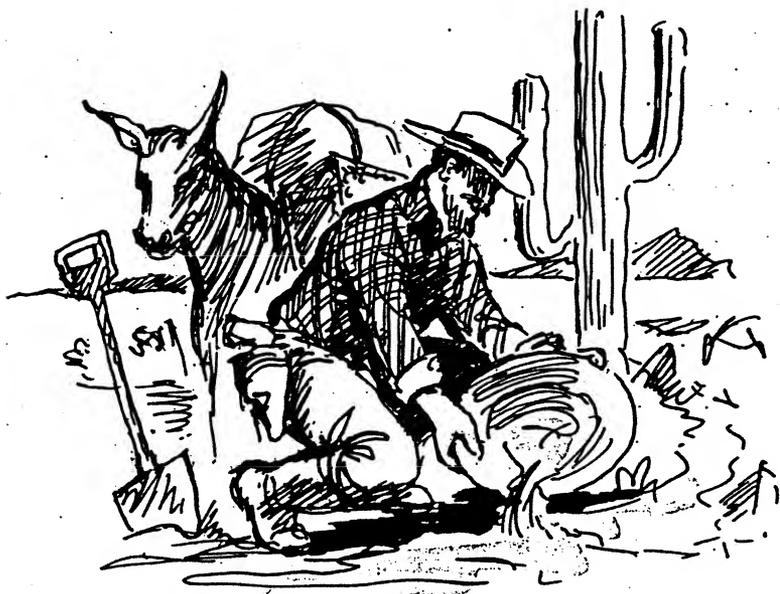
Several types of pencils provide two, three and four combined mechanisms, each filled with different colored leads. Pen and pencil combinations are also available in one unit.

Novelty items combine pencils with cigarette lighters, lipsticks, perfume, and what have you.



After you've waded through this brief outline of how typical pens and pencils work, you should be convinced that repair is not for the amateur. Too many things can go wrong and any adjustments call for close tolerances.

Pen repairs are inexpensive when done by the professional, so why risk further damage by trying your own hand at it? If flushing out the old ink and refilling it with a fresh supply will not put the pen back to normal, suggest a thorough cleaning and adjustment. Approved pen repair men must spend weeks in training and keep up-to-date with periodic review and study of specifications before they are competent.



**C**onfusing to the customer and salesman alike are the statements surrounding the gold parts of writing instruments. Here is an explanation based on trade practice rules issued by the Federal Trade Commission, October, 1949. The FTC does not require marking or statements of gold content, but if any statements concerning the gold parts are made, they must conform to their rulings. We assume here that if you have a gold part you want your customers to know about it. How can you explain it correctly?

Pure gold is known as "24 Karat." Since pure gold is quite soft—and expensive—it is more commonly used in alloy form. The FTC requires that if the word "gold" alone is used in a description, the part must be 24 karat fineness. When the part is an alloy, the karat fineness must be given in any description made. For example, "14 Karat gold," or "10K gold." (Less than 10 karat fineness cannot be considered gold alloy.) If a part is described as 14 Karat gold, therefore, it means that the part is 14 parts gold and 10 parts baser metal.

The terms, "gold filled," or "rolled gold plate," are used to designate parts mechanically plated with gold or gold alloy of not less than 10 karat fineness. Any description of these parts must show the proportional weight and karat fineness clearly. For example, "1/20 14K Gold Filled," "1/40 10K Rolled Gold Plate."

The term "Gold Electroplated" is used when a part is electrolytically plated with gold or gold alloy of not less than 10 karat fineness to a minimum thickness throughout equivalent to seven-millionths (.000007) of an inch. If the thickness is less than the above minimum, the parts may be called, "Gold Washed" or "Gold Flashed."

## There's Gold in Them Thar Quills!

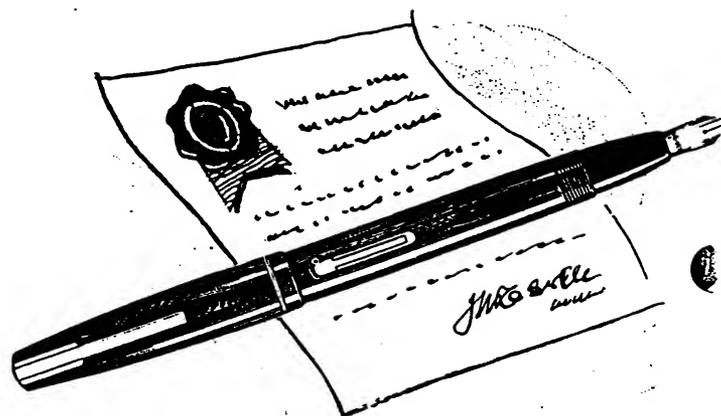
In your descriptions and advertising, be sure you are using the right terminology. Stay away from words that might lead the customer to believe some parts are gold when they are not, such as "Duragold," "Gold Appearing," "Finegold," etc. Better read the FTC rules if you write ads.

## About Guarantees

**B**iggest headache in the pen business for manufacturers and dealers alike was the battle of guarantees of a few years ago. Although the guarantees are still good on the pens sold under them at that time, the pens sold today have more realistic and reasonable claims and guarantees.

Study the guarantee form that usually accompanies the pen or pencil. It is still very generous in most cases and can be used as a selling point. Main thing to watch is that you do not, from habit, blithely promise what you cannot back up.

Remember, too, that a satisfied pen customer is also a potential customer for your many other lines. Be smart enough to sacrifice a few of your "rights" to win his respect.



# The Market

The yearly retail sales of mechanical writing instruments exceed 250 million dollars. Who furnishes the market for such a tremendous volume of business? Is the stationer getting his share?

First, let's talk about the fountain pen market. What we say about fountain pens will follow closely the market breakdown of comparable lines of mechanical pencils, ball points, and dip pens.

A study of the fountain pen market shows that its merchandise is designed for three broad and yet distinct types of trade. Although price is not always a good criteria, it is a universally understood standard of value and so is the best we can use here to establish the three market ranges. Bear in mind that there is considerable overlapping as far as individual products are concerned.

stationer tries to sell them first whenever possible. Although his dollar profit on all sales for a given period may be greater in the less expensive lines because of greater volume of sales, he still sees the advantage of "selling up" whenever possible.

"How can I honestly sell a higher priced pen to a customer when I know a lower priced one will write just as well?" Many sincere salesmen are mentally disturbed by this question which seems to keep them from trying to sell the prestige lines. But those who understand human nature realize that they can satisfy customers emotionally as well as practically.

Let's let the manufacturers argue whether a \$3 pen writes just as well as a \$20 pen for purposes of this problem. We have two pens which, utility-wise, give equal results. If we try to sell the luxury appointments of the \$20 pen, are we trying to sell it for more than it's worth? Not at all! Why does your wife buy the finer dress when a cheaper dress would cover her just as well? Why do you buy a more beautiful car when a less expensive, standard model will get you places just as efficiently? Because you receive gratification through pride of possession—more emotional satisfaction and comfort. The

<i>The Market</i>	<i>Approximate Price Range</i>	<i>Comment</i>
PRESTIGE	Over \$5	Also called the LUXURY or GIFT market
UTILITY	\$1.50—\$5	Where prestige is not as important as utility
PRICE	Below \$1.50	Where price is a primary consideration.

Most pen companies produce merchandise for at least two of these three markets. There is no attempt to disparage either extreme for each fulfills a definite consumer need as the millions of dollars in sales show so clearly. The policy of the store dictates which of the markets will be exploited. Here are some points to consider in analyzing these markets:

## The Prestige Line

There is naturally more unit profit on the higher-priced writing instruments and so the smart

added joy of acquiring something fine and beautiful as well as useful is worth its cost!

Extensive advertising has established an accepted value to the prestige lines which say, "He has an X pen which cost umteen dollars." When given as a present, the happy recipient has no trouble estimating its value. Since prestige lines are primarily gift sales (estimates range as high as 85%), volume sale periods are Christmas, semester graduations, and school openings. Special promotions, of course, tend to level off the slower periods. Every day is gift day for someone!

## The Utility Line

Utility and luxury is a relative matter. So our \$5 border line is only an arbitrary one. When two pens are considered together, a gold band on one may stamp it "luxury" when compared with the other even though the prices are \$2.50 against \$1.50. In general, the pens we have called "utility" are bought for the customer's own use in greater numbers than the "luxury" group. The conservative buyer who is not too concerned with prestige, will prefer the closer match of cost and utility found in this bracket. Found here also is the multiple-pen customer, the accountant and office worker who needs a good pen for office work but likes more luxury for his dress pocket, or the sportsman who doesn't want to risk a higher-priced pen for his outings. High school and college students like this range and so do the parents and friends who buy the pens for them.

## The Price Line

Extremely good values are produced by the more reputable firms in this market for the customer who is attracted by low cost. Mass production and distribution make seemingly impossible low prices a reality. The lower-unit profit to the dealer is offset by carded merchandise and variety-type displays which produce volume sales without too much selling time.

The high mortality rate of children's pens makes parents look to the low-cost pen. Its slow cost, too, makes it especially attractive for advertising give-aways.



## The Pencil Market



Of all the mechanical writing instruments, the pencil has the most universal market. In fact, it is so much taken for granted that too many stationer salesmen fail to give it the prominence in their line that it deserves. Consequently, the specialty salesmen continue to skim the cream off the pencil market. Every day, stationery salesmen somewhere hear, "Gee, Joe, why didn't you tell me you could supply imprinted X-brand pencils? I'd rather you had furnished that thousand gross order than the Whoosis Mail Order Emporium." Don't let it happen to you!

Although especially popular as the companion to a fountain pen and ball point in the matched sets, the pencil has its own individual market too. The school child, housewife, office worker, mechanic, or professional, all appreciate the versatile pencil that retains its point.

Artists and draftsmen who use leads of different degrees of hardness find that several mechanical pencils or a double-pointed one save time and expense. Accountants, shipping clerks, students, or teachers who write with more than one color use several pencils or the multiple-point types.

The crayon styles, especially the china-marking variety, are popular for shipping departments, price markers, engravers, glaziers, baggagemen, carpenters, tile setters, artists, photographers, and many others.

## The Ball Point Market



Strangely, the ball point has had little effect on the conventional pen sales. Dealers report that it seems to have formed its own niche in demand and manufacturers have followed this belief with the matched sets of fountain pen, ball point, and pencil. Where any effect has been noted, the ball point's uses make it more of a competitor with the pencil. Later models have, in fact, closer approximated the slimmer

lines of the pencil instead of the pen which it originally copied.

The ball point is especially popular where a number of carbons must be made with an ink original. Every office and plant provides clerks and salesmen who deal with carbon copies. And who can forget that a ball point doesn't leak at high altitudes. Good point for airmen and flying salesmen and executives.

Reluctance first shown to accept papers written with a ball point has tended to disappear with the better inks. Many banks now accept ball point signatures without question. Since many schools are now accepting ball point work from their students, parents need not live in fear of having Mary squirted, spilled upon, or having her curls dipped in the inkwell.

Office machine operators whose writing instrument must bounce around considerably, have taken to the ball point. Is this a clue for your next call?



## The Advertising Business

Imprinted pencils for advertising purposes are estimated to be second only to calendars in popularity. In 1948 alone, lithographed pencils were a \$110 million dollar market. Mechanical pencils, ball points, and desk sets are naturals for imprinting trademarks and other advertising, providing at low cost a useful and long-lasting reminder of the giver. Quality is important because the ad lasts only as long as the instrument. The ad even does double duty when the pencil or pen is loaned out by its owner.

Be on the lookout for new business, expansion of old ones, new sales executives, new products, anniversaries, seasonal promotions. Work especially hard on those firms using other types of lithographed give-aways. Unusually good prospects seem to be insurance and trucking companies, oil distributors, grain elevators, and farm equipment dealers. Contact the advertising or sales promotion managers. Your manufacturers will furnish sample kits and color cards to help you build up this lucrative business. First orders may be small but the repeat orders are usually very good. Leads and erasers make excellent follow-up advertising items once the pencils are distributed.



# The Industrial Market

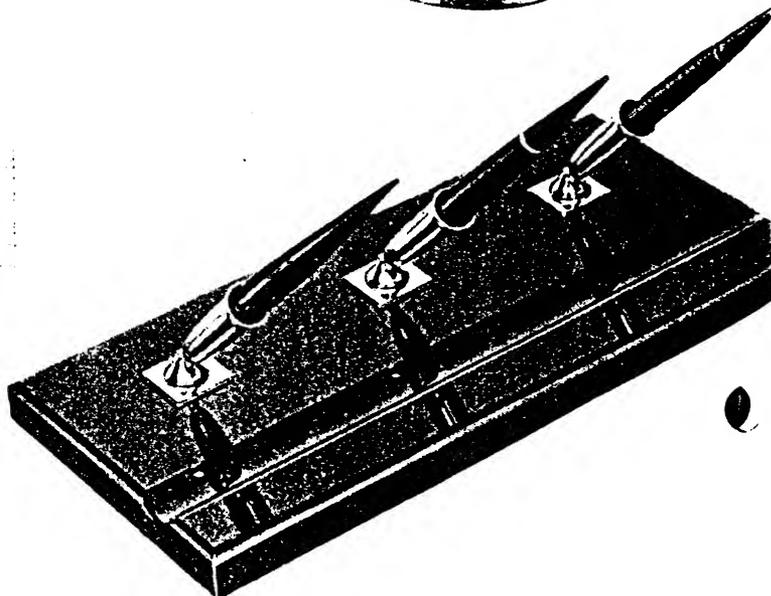
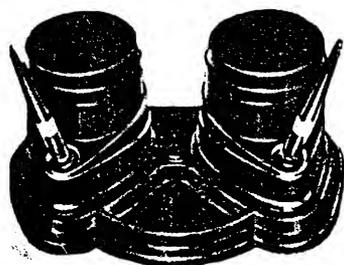
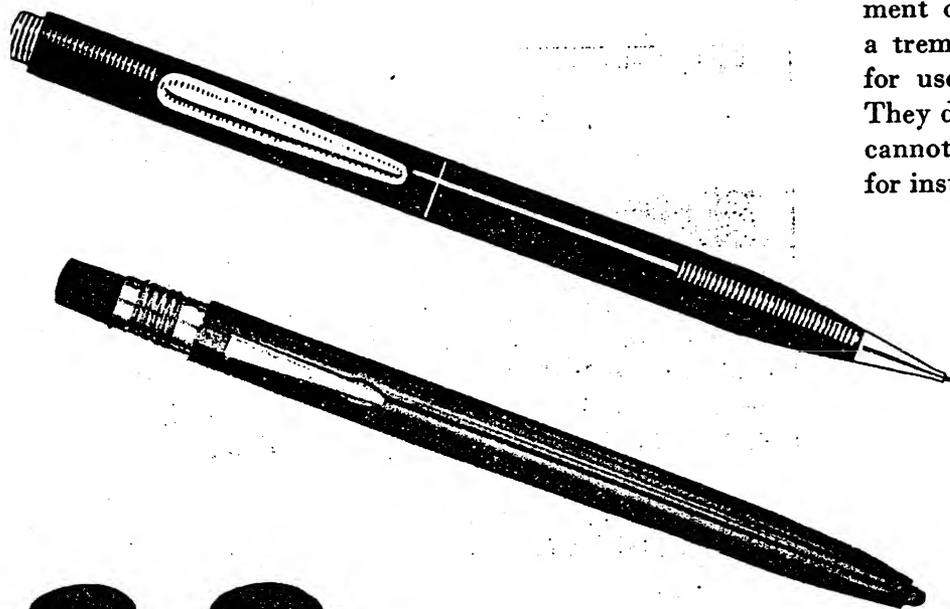
An excellent market for the stationer and yet one which is extremely neglected is the industrial market for pens, ball points and pencils.

Many firms have found that it is a good investment to furnish writing equipment to their employees. Imprinting the firm name may be all you need to land a big order. Combination

sets for contests and bonuses as well as for holiday and anniversary gifts should not be overlooked by the industrial salesman.

Every executive who meets the public needs a desk set that adds prestige to the firm. Every office or plant desk needs a utility desk set.

Banks, utilities, employment offices, government offices and educational institutions offer a tremendous market for fountain or dip sets for use by the patrons in filling out papers. They don't run out of ink during the rush hour, cannot be lost, misplaced, yet are always ready for instant use.





## The Practical Gift

With the drive to make the stationer a practical gift headquarters, showing pen sets to the buyers for offices and plants may pave the way for many employee sales either at the store or through the buyer. Make it easy for them! Remind the executives or their secretaries of their availability by telephone for that birthday, anniversary, or appreciation gift. Offer to send them direct from your store if speed is essential. Leave descriptive folders of the more popular selections.

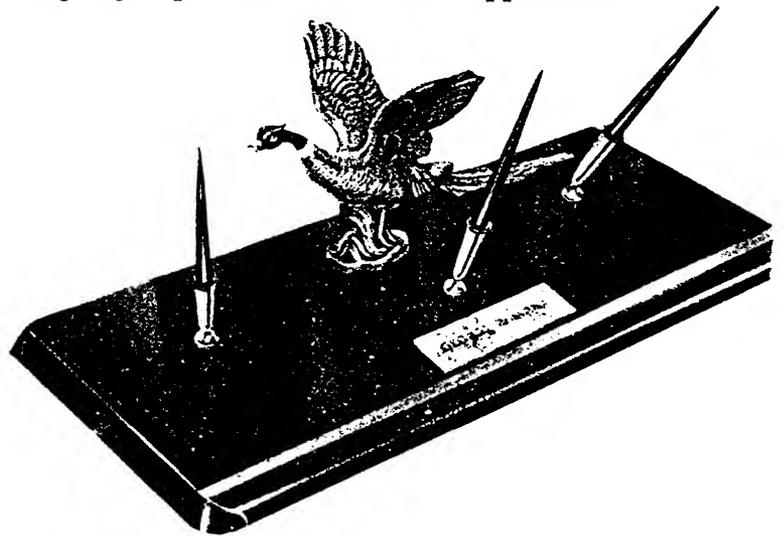
It's not unusual for office workers to have two or more pens. This is especially true of accountants and bookkeepers who need a fine point for their work but prefer a broader point for their personal use.

Executives can give the more expensive writing sets to their valuable business associates and deduct them as legitimate business expense. In this way, \$500 worth of merchandise may cost less than half this amount after the income tax exemption is taken. And that's a potent sales argument!

Somebody is selling pints, quarts and gallons of writing fluid to your industries. Is it you?

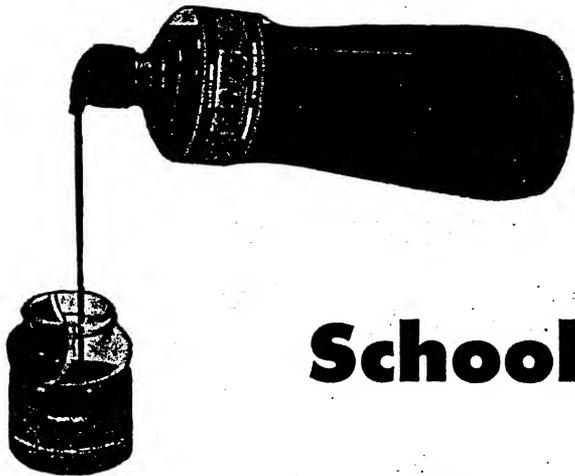
## Social and Business Organizations

Every town has several fraternal and social societies and almost all of them have one or more businessman's clubs. Most of these organizations hold elections each year and present the outgoing top officer with some appreciation



token. What can be more appropriate than a beautiful desk set with a suitably engraved name plate? Wouldn't combination sets make wonderful gifts for the lesser officials?

Build your card file on the organizations in your town. Ask the secretaries when the elections will be held then set up a reminder system that will get you to call on the right committee three or four weeks before the election. Your desk set will be a constant reminder of the organization and will be used and enjoyed many times a day for years to come. Can they say the same thing about a gavel or plaque?



## Schools

**T**he schools are one of the largest businesses in the world. Get to know your school board and their methods for ordering school supplies. Surely you can sell them on the advantages of buying from you rather than the catalog house

## Pen Repair

**M**anufacturers report that the dealers with pen repair facilities sell the most pens. The customer has a more secure feeling in buying a pen from a man who understands them and has had experience with their troubles. He also feels assured that if the pen does not give proper service, the dealer is in a better position to correct the difficulty.

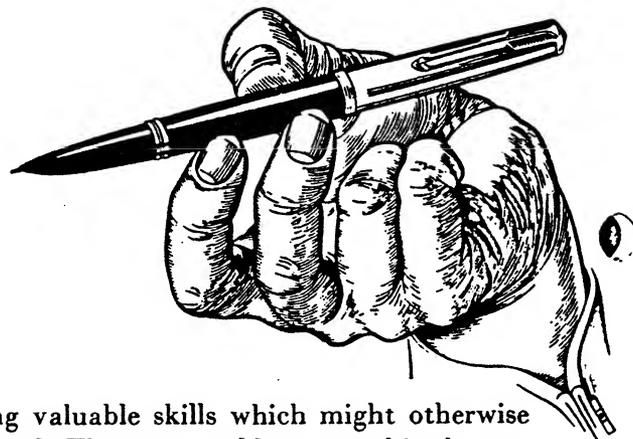
Aside from the profit from increased pen sales, the repair business itself provides a surprising return in spite of the seemingly low charges. The traffic it brings in from potential customers of office supplies and other merchandise is not to be disregarded either.

Authorized service men are usually required to take a short course provided by the manufacturers who stand a major portion of the expense involved. The manufacturers then supply repair instruments and parts as needed. Pen repair is an excellent vocation for disabled veterans and dealers have worked out plans for

in a distant city! Bulk ink is a school favorite but don't overlook the possibility of desk sets, dip pens, and special-purpose pencils.

Business schools need fountain pens with shorthand nibs. If the students buy their own, at least let the instructors know that you have the right pens in stock. Bookkeeping classes, too, need the special nibs. Perhaps you can arrange for a class demonstration some period.

Contact the clubs and athletic organizations for engraved and imprinted pencils and ball points. Most companies have facilities for stamping or lithographing the school colors, team emblem, or any signature desired. A good money-raising method for the clubs—and yourself. If you can't find a club to sponsor the plan, why not try it on your own? Get a few out to campus leaders and watch the rest sell.



utilizing valuable skills which might otherwise be wasted. The man could operate his shop at home and service several dealers in town; he could work in the store on a percentage basis or on a regular salary.



# How to Sell a Pen

Several manufacturers have done an excellent job of providing the dealers with selling hints and aids. Study their materials carefully for they point out the features you should emphasize in the specific lines you carry.

Manual 1 of this series, "How to Sell Stationery Satisfaction," outlined the six steps taken by the modern successful store salesman. As you read them again, think of how you would use them to sell more pens and pencils.

Let's go over the steps again together. The notes will be directed primarily at the pen sale, but you can fit them easily to the handling of a customer requesting a ball point, desk set, or mechanical pencil.

## Step 1.

### Welcome the Customer Cordially

If the friendly greeting and SMILE doesn't lead him to state his purpose, and if he shows some interest in the pen counter, lead off with the "merchandise approach," some interesting



fact or selling point about the pen display he happens to be looking at. "That's the new Whoosis hooded pen advertised in Life this month." Shy away from the foolish and sometimes irritable greetings, like "Looking for something?" or "May I show you some pens?" Fortunately, most customers make their wants known quickly, so let's go to Step 2.

## Step 2.

### Locate His Major Interests

First move is to qualify the customer, to find out for whom the pen is being bought. Until you do this, you're like a blindfolded hunter. A



leading question, "Is it for yourself?" is a simple and quick method that usually brings results. A "yes" answer gets you started immediately, a "no" answer establishes the purchase as a gift.

You may like to vary this probe with the less obtrusive, "Do you prefer a fine or medium point?" The answer will usually give the same results.

If the pen or pencil is for another person, a second important question must be asked, "Is it for a man or woman?" This simple question usually starts the flow of the type of information you need—man, woman, boy, girl, young, older, student, businessman, etc. But if it doesn't give it all at once, don't keep asking questions. Start showing your wares immediately.

### Step 3.

### Fit Your Merchandise to His Interests

On the basis of your qualification of the customer, start showing one set at a time with some simple selling statement, like, "Here's a beautiful ensemble that has been very popular for a man's gift."



Even if the customer asks for a pen alone, show him boxed sets with the matching pencil. A pen is never more attractive than when it is complemented by the stage decorations of the box and by its companion pencil. If he insists, "But I only want the pen," say kindly, "Then I'll be glad to break the set for you." It should please him to know that your store will inconvenience itself just to accommodate him. Then, too, the broken box becomes an unspoken suggestion that he is buying only half the right amount and will aid you later on when you stress the beauty and convenience of the matching pencil.

Don't talk too much! Listening is very important in these first few minutes. After the customer has had a brief look at the first article, bring out a higher priced ensemble for means of comparison, also with a few, well-chosen words about the set. "Here's the same set in—(give primary differences)—especially attractive for a gift. Isn't it beautiful?"

With the two sets in front of the customer, begin pointing out the selling features of the pens. As with any sale, it is very important to provide the customer with at least two choices—two pens, two sets, a pen OR a set. This sets his mind to deciding WHICH to buy and wipes away the dangerous, "SHOULD I buy?" Salesmen may argue about showing the highest-priced pen first or the medium-priced one, but they all agree to showing the quality line first instead of the low-priced one. People do not buy pens because they are cheap, they buy them because they satisfy their writing needs. When you establish value first, the price shows the pen to be even more of a bargain.

### Don't Emphasize Price—Yet

If a prospect has centered his interest on one pen or set but is still slow in deciding, continue the "which" technique by bringing out another in the same price range but of a different color. Then it becomes a choice between the "dignified black or the livelier blue" instead of "this or nothing."

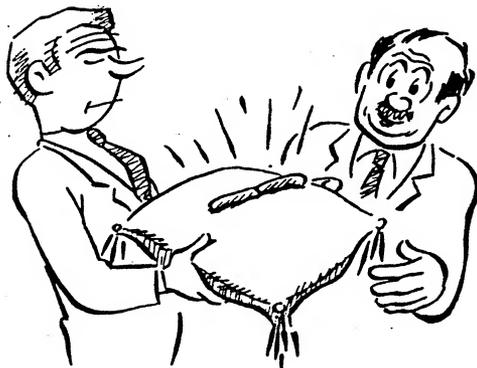
You can expect the price to be brought up early in the sale, but don't bring it up yourself. Concentrate on selling features first to establish value. Never use a price approach like, "How much do you want to pay?" or "What price line did you have in mind?" You're licked from the start with that! You can take his "price temperature" by observing his reactions to the models you show him. When the price is asked, don't stall, give it simply and go on with the selling features to continue driving home the quality that over-balances the price. "This is the \$15 model. It has the Supersmooth point, the distinctive modern hood, the———."

If the customer asks for a pen in a particular price range, show it to him without argument. But tactfully bring out a better pen for comparison. Even if you don't succeed in "selling up," at least you can clinch the sale of the first pen by noting the features it has that are similar to the better pen. Many salesmen find success

in showing the top-quality pen second in this circumstance, then bringing out the medium-priced pen. The higher-priced pen might be too much of a jump, but the medium-priced one shows up more clearly as a better buy, feature for feature, when compared with better merchandise than with lower quality.

## The Demonstration

Stressing the selling features of a pen is more effective AFTER a preference has been shown. Talking selling features too early wastes time and may scare the customer off. Wait until he has looked at several pens, then remove all but those in which he has shown the most interest. Dealers suggest, to discourage shoplifters, that you maintain a pre-determined number of pens on the counter, say three or four, at any one time. As you take one out, put a reject back. A full tray is very inviting while you go in search of a desk set.



Treat the pens reverently, like so many jewels. You can establish the feeling of their value by the way in which you handle them. Slam them carelessly on the counter and you obviously don't consider them worth very much. Fondle them lovingly and you increase the desire of ownership.

Get the customer into the act. Modern salesmanship shows the value of having the customer hold the pen in his hands, examine the features you explain, feel its smoothness, see its beauty, try the smooth-writing flow of the point. If you do your job well, you establish the feeling of ownership and a reluctance to give the pen back to you. The wise salesman makes good use of

the YOU attitude of selling. "YOUR pen will bring you many years of writing ease." "This gift will establish YOU as a friend worth having."

Remember, too, that you are selling customer SATISFACTION, and not plastic and metal parts no matter how well they function. Couch your statements in what the feature means to the customer. "The increased ink capacity relieves YOU of the need for filling so often."

## Sell the Write Way

A pen or pencil is meant to be used for writing. The automobile salesman takes his prospect for a ride because that's the way the car will be used. You must let the customer WRITE with the pen before he really fits himself into the ownership picture. If you do not have demonstrator pens, dip the pens for which preference has been shown and let the customer write with them, explaining the selling points of the point and feed as you go. "Notice how the exclusive cuts on the feed permit instant starting of the ink. You don't have to shake and pound THIS pen to get it started!" The customer is never actually sold until he uses his pen.

Getting him to pick out his point preference often clinches the sale early. From then on out it is a matter of picking the pen body to go with the point.

Matching the customer to the proper point is a vital step in the sale. His opinion of the pen depends on how comfortably it writes for him, not on its exquisite beauty, extravagant prestige, or faultless guarantee.

Dealers point out that the point selection step provides an excellent chance to show the customer that you want him to be satisfied. Watch how he writes. Does he push hard? Light? Is he left handed or does he write back-handed? Does he make bold strokes or dainty ones? Ask him what type of work it will be used for. Use the point selection chart to help you give good advice. The average customer asks for a "medium" point but there are many ideas on just what a medium point is. One dealer reports good results by giving the customer a finer or broader point than the one first asked for. If the one he asked for is really the one he wanted, when he gets it his reaction is all the more emphatic. If the first point was better, the dealer made him more satisfied.

## Step 4.

### Meet His Questions and Objections

Your customer usually raises objections to get more information. Many objections are often raised to strengthen a decision already made, hoping that your answer will minimize an objection, making the decision a wiser one. Sometimes objections are only excuses. You must analyze the objection to discover the real obstacle so that it can be overcome.



With the wide selection most stationers carry, it is comparatively easy to answer objections by the customer with an alternative size, color, point, or price. If you cannot turn away an objection, at least do not emphasize it or keep returning to it. Substitute another line of thought as quickly as possible so that the good features of the pen soon push the objections out.

Occasionally you can turn an objection into a selling point—especially if you have anticipated it, know your selling pointers, and are able to plan ahead. “Isn’t it a little large?” “Yes, it’s really a man-sized pen. Balances better and holds more ink.”

Whatever you do, don’t show annoyance, argue, or contradict the customer. The old saw, “Win an argument and lose a customer,” may sound trite but it’s all too true. Find something in their objection you can agree to momentarily, then move into other selling points. It’s the

workable, “Yes, but—” approach. “I don’t like the covered point!” might bring out something like, “The hooded point IS a little startling in appearance, but it does wonders to keep the nib from drying out and to prevent flooding.”

Anticipate price objection. It is a normal occurrence. If you expect it and have the ammunition ready for overcoming its resistance, you have the advantage from the start. There is more to price than just percentage profit. The quality that gives the customer satisfaction is remembered long after the price is forgotten. It means good will to sell quality!

## Step 5.

### Help Him Decide to Buy

When the customer indicates by his remarks or actions that he has directed his choice to one of several pens, remove the ones in which he shows little interest and focus on the ones indicated to be more attractive or appropriate. Emphasize again any features that were of special interest, always giving a little more preference yourself to the higher quality pen in whatever price range the customer seems to prefer.



Avoid the appearance of hurry, but don’t drag the sale out either. A question on a minor point will start the closing scene in most cases. “Would he like the silver or gold trim better?” “Would you prefer your whole name engraved or just your initials?”

For a deliberate customer, an assumption that he has reached a decision often works. Observe the one he has handled more than the others and say, "You really picked out the prettiest combination of the lot!"



## **Assure Him That He Made a Good Buy**

After the sale has been made, knock off any rough edges in the person's mind that he might not have made a wise purchase by a few words of encouragement and admiration for his choice.



"You're going to get years of service out of that set, Mr. Williams." "That set will show your client you really value his friendship!"

Regular customers provide the major profits for the stationer, and a salesman's following is a stamp of his value to the store. Any friendly gesture after the sale is made is more impressive because the customer feels that it is more sincere.

## **Be Sure He Can Work It**

A fearful amount of the pen and pencil repairs stem from the owner's lack of knowledge on the care and operation of his instrument. Be more assured of customer satisfaction by taking just a few minutes after the sale to make sure the customer knows how to use his writing instruments. Asking, "You know how to work it?" is not enough. Who wants to look stupid by saying, "No"? "May I show you how to fill

it?" or proceeding to demonstrate the filling operation brings a better response. Your instruction sheet furnished by the manufacturer will be your guide. Be sure you can work any instrument in the case without hesitation.

Some firms print up some general hints for pen and pencil care. Besides helping the customer to better performance, the list serves as a reminder of the firm for repairs or other purchases. Here are some suggestions you can use to make your own list or for your own information.

## **Your Ball Point Pen**

### **1. START THE BALL ROLLING!**

In disuse, the ball becomes slightly "frozen." Give it a few brisk circular strokes on scrap paper to wash away the stale ink on the ball.

### **2. KEEP IT CLEAN!**

When not used for awhile, ink may accumulate around the tip. Wipe it off with a cloth or tissue. If the pen has been used on rough paper, tiny particles may have collected around the tip. A few bold strokes on bond paper will remove them.

### **3. PROTECT THE POINT!**

No point tapping, please! The ball is precision fitted and any battering will do it little good. Don't use it for a stirring rod, either. If it does get wet, write a few lines before putting it away. Stay away from metal edge rulers—they may scratch the ball.

### **4. HOLD IT UP!**

Most ball pens work better if held a little straighter than the usual pencil to keep from scraping the edge of the socket. Remember, it's the revolving ball that writes the line.

There is not much that need be added to the specific instructions furnished by the manufacturer with the mechanical pencil. When you offer the extra box of leads, suggest that the customer keep the container for reference when buying his next refill to be sure that he gets the right diameter and length of lead. Be sure to demonstrate the correct operation and refilling method after you have made the sale. Saves unnecessary complaints later.

## Your Fountain Pen

### 1. FILL IT PROPERLY

Follow the instructions of the manufacturer or salesman. Be sure the point is completely submerged in the ink and the pen given time to completely fill.

### 2. KEEP IT FILLED

An ALMOST empty pen is more apt to flood or feed too freely.

### 3. KEEP IT CLEAN

Dried or deteriorated inks clog the small channels if allowed to accumulate. Flush it several times with COLD water or the same ink you are going to use, each time you refill it. Flush it with water before allowing it to lie unused for any length of time.

### 4. KEEP IT UP

Best position is clipped upright so the ink can drain back instead of being jostled out into the cap.

### 5. DON'T MIX INKS

Always use good grades of fresh ink but do not mix them. The chemical reaction may cause sludge that clogs the ink channels. Rinse in cold water before changing inks.

### 6. KEEP THE CAP ON

Besides protection, the cap helps keep the pen point moist so that the ink starts instantly.

### 7. DON'T MONKEY!

Your pen may look sturdy but it is actually a finely balanced instrument. Position and spacings of the parts are precision engineered. Our pen repair men have these specifications and are trained at manufacturers' schools in their use. Let them do it for a few cents—or maybe without charge.

### 8. PROTECT IT!

Dropping may damage the point, crack or mar the cap and barrel. Don't stir hot tobacco or cold bourbon with it. Heat and alcohol can mar and warp it.

### 9. GET THE POINT!

There are a number of point selections to fit any need you have for fineness and flexibility. If your pen doesn't produce the writing you like, let us change the point to one that does.

### 10. USE THE WRITE PAPER

Pens can't do their best work on rough or cheap paper nor on the very, very slick papers. Paper particles and sizing will clog the point. If you have to use these papers, see about getting a proper point for them.

## Increasing the Average Sale

Your showing as a salesman depends on two primary factors—the number of sales AND the average amount of each sale. Here are the places where you can increase the AVERAGE pen sale:

1. Sell a higher quality pen than the customer originally asked for
2. Sell the companion pencil
3. Sell the companion ball point
4. Sell a fresh bottle of ink
5. Sell an extra box of leads and erasers
6. Sell an extra ball point refill
7. Sell an ink eradicator outfit

The focal point of the sale is usually the fountain pen. Although it is a good practice to show the set at the same time, as explained

previously, don't jeopardize the pen sale by insisting on the set too soon. AFTER the pen is sold and the customer is shown how to use it properly, start on the "selling up" program.

You can lead to the mechanical pencil sale through Step 5 if you have just sold the pen alone. "You have bought a fine pen. One that you will be proud of for a long, long time. Here is the matching pencil—they go together to complement each other in your pocket. For only \$3 more you can have a beautiful matched set and an exquisite gift box." Since quality and value have been established earlier as evidenced by the purchase of the pen, the mention of the

low price helps clinch the sale of the set. Don't go into the selling features of the pencil unless he hesitates too long. Selling the set is more a matter of the heart than it is the mind at this point.

If the pen is also a part of a set including a ball point, start the procedure above with the ball point included, dropping down to just the pencil if necessary.

Reasons for buying other accessories are brought out in these sample sentences:

"You'll want a clean, FRESH bottle of ink to start off the new pen. Here's the ink recommended for it." Assume that he will buy it,

don't ask if he will. He'll tell you if he doesn't want it.

"What grade of lead would you like for refills? Medium?" It's much easier to nod the head than change the trend of the conversation.

"Here's the refill unit that fits your ball point. You'll want to keep it near for the time when the pen finally goes dry. Let me show you how easily it is replaced." Make it difficult for him to say "No," easy to accept.

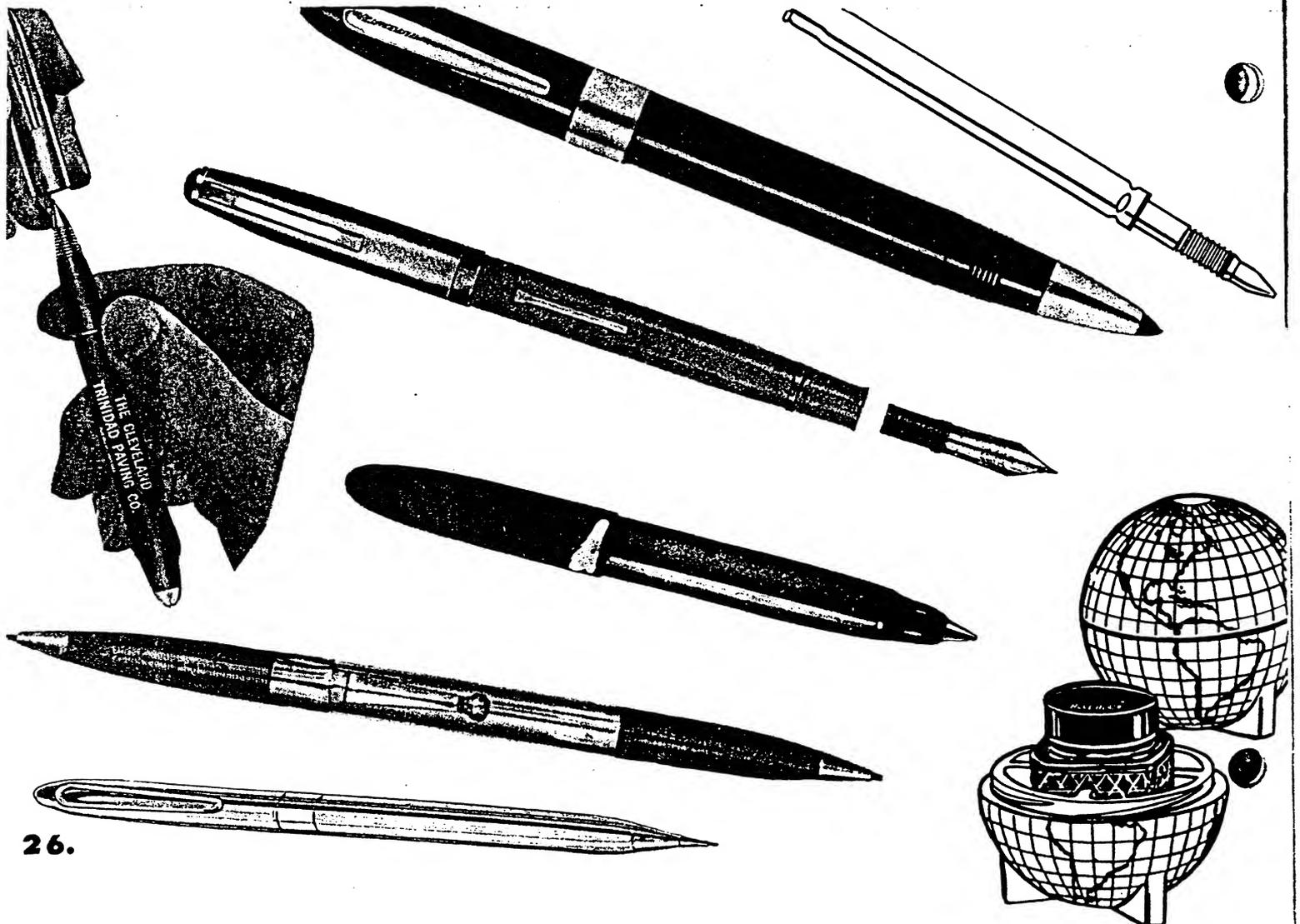
"Have you used this eradicator for taking out ink without chewing up your paper? Makes your social correspondence much neater. Let me show you how it makes ink disappear."

## Selling Hints from Successful Pen Salesmen



1. Try to sell the prestige line first. It's just good business, for it means more unit profit. But don't overlook the fact that you will sell more of the lower priced instruments, so be equally well informed of their selling features.
2. Show the pen from the set to establish the idea of a complete unit. Don't push the set too hard at first, however. Wait until the pen is sold, then show the advantages of a matching pencil or ball point.
3. Pen salesmen, especially if connected with repair, seem to do better if wearing a smock. Adds authority.
4. Fitting the point to the customer is extremely important. Ask the type of work the pen will do. Observe the customer's writing position and style.
5. Offer free cleaning and ink refills to bring prospects to the store. To make it more direct, you might offer the service to specific types of customers—salesmen, office employees. Print courtesy cards for distribution by your salesmen.
6. Cash in on the advertising business for pencils and ball points especially. It is estimated that for every one sold, twenty are given away.
7. The package is important in a gift sale. Be sure to show it with the instruments.
8. Use a good grade of bond paper for the scratch pad point tester.
9. You **MUST** know how to fill every pen, operate every pencil, change cartridges in every ball point you sell. If you fumble in front of the customer you jeopardize the sale.
10. Empty and refill a new pen several times for best results.
11. Use the term, "unintentional misuse" to explain damage caused by the customer. Doesn't it sound better than, "You didn't use it right"?
12. "You don't fill it right" is apt to rile the customer who complains about his pen. Ask, "Wouldn't you like to fill your pen with clean, fresh ink?" Observe how he fills it, then explain any corrections kindly. He can't insist he filled it properly after demonstrating that he didn't.
13. If the customer buys the pen only, take his name and pen description for later mail follow-up. If it was for an anniversary or seasonal gift, drop him a letter on the next occasion suggesting the pencil and ball point.

14. Say, "I'll put this box aside for you," to encourage him to change his mind about buying the set.
15. Invite change of nibs within a few days by use of a dated sales slip if the pen allows such interchange.
16. If the customer says, "Too much," agree partially, then sell quality. "It does appear to be a lot at first glance, but——"
17. After your filling demonstration, have the customer fill his own pen to be sure he understands. Saves up to 70% of the complaints, say the pen repair men.
18. Know your stock! Catalog it for instant finding by brand, size, cap, color, and point.
19. Watch your stock. Keep a balanced inventory so that your customer will have a choice of points, colors, and prices.
20. Set the stage for selling higher quality when the instrument is to be a gift by saying, "Then you'll want something nice. Here's——"
21. Writing instruments are considered impulse purchases for display purposes. The display should tie in with national advertising by saying, "We have them here."
22. Pen "bars" are becoming popular with specially designed counters for side or island. Front positions are more popular, although many dealers are now putting higher pen display units farther to the rear of the store, brightly lighted, to draw the customer past other merchandise.
23. Display instruments close to the customer and lighted to emphasize their beauty.
24. Be careful not to hide the higher priced pens with counter merchandise.



# GLOSSARY

- Air channel**—A channel in the feed of a pen which allows the air to return to the reservoir. See Page 5.
- Blind cap**—Covering for the outside portions of filling mechanisms extending from the end of the barrel.
- Barrel**—Main outside housing of the pen or pencil. See Page 3.
- Breather tube**—Tube within the reservoir of sacless pens which allows the ink to enter and the air to escape. See Page 4.
- Button fill**—Type of filling mechanism. See Page 3.
- Cap**—Covering for the pocket pen when not in use. See Page 6.
- Capillarity**—Natural phenomenon whereby the surface of a liquid raises when in contact with a solid. See Page 5.
- Capillary cuts**—Cuts in feed to regulate ink flow. See Page 5.
- Clutch**—Part of mechanical pencil which grips the lead. See Page 10.
- Comb cuts**—Cuts in feed to regulate ink flow. See Page 5.
- Diaphragm fill**—Type of filling mechanism. See Page 4.
- Dip set**—A desk pen without an ink reservoir. See Page 7.
- Ejector**—Part of expel type pencil which ejects the remaining lead. See Page 10.
- Feed**—Portion of the pen which regulates the flow of ink. See Page 3.
- Finger fill**—Type of filling mechanism. See Page 4.
- Fins**—Cuts in feed to regulate ink flow. See Page 5.
- Heart**—See "Pierce." See Page 6.
- Heel**—End of the nib opposite the point. See Page 5.
- Inner cap**—Fixture within some caps designed to form a seal around the feed and nib when not in use. See Page 6.
- Karat**—Unit of gold content measurement, 24-karats being solid gold. See Page 12.
- Lever fill**—Type of filling mechanism. See Page 3.
- Military clip**—A short clip designed to be concealed by the pocket flap.
- Nib**—The whole metal part forming the "point" of the pen. See "Point." See Pages 3 and 5.
- Pierce**—Hole in the nib allowing free entrance for the ink to the reservoir. Also called "heart." See Page 6.
- Plunger fill**—Type of filling mechanism. See Page 4.
- Pneumatic fill**—Type of filling mechanism. See Page 4.
- Point**—Technically the very tip of the nib, but commonly the entire nib. See Page 5.
- Pressure bar**—Part of filling mechanism which compresses the sac. See Page 3.
- Propel Pencil**—Pencil which propels the lead forward by means of a piston. See Page 10.
- Propel-Repel-Expel Pencil**—Pencil utilizing a plunger which ejects the lead from the clutch on the last few turns. See Page 10.
- Propel-Repel Pencil**—Pencil which embodies a clutch allowing a repel action. See Page 10.
- Repeater Pencil**—A pencil which advances the lead by means of a collet, using a push action instead of a turning action. See Page 10.
- Reservoir**—Part of the pen which holds the writing fluid in storage. See Page 3.
- Retractable unit**—A writing unit of a pen or pencil which can be drawn up into the barrel when not in use.
- Section**—Portion of the pen joining the feed and nib to the barrel. See Page 4.
- Side cuts**—Cuts in feed to regulate ink flow. See Page 5.
- Sleeve tip**—An elongated pencil tip to give more support to the thin leads.
- Socket**—Portion of ball point which houses the ball. See Page 9.
- Step by step pencil**—See Repeater Pencil.
- Vents**—Holes in a pen cap below the inner cap to allow air circulation around the section. See Page 6.

# QUESTION LIST

## PART 1 PAGES 1-7

1. What percentage of your store's sales are from pens and mechanical pencils?
2. Is the fountain pen a relatively new invention? Explain. (1-2)
3. Name the principal parts of a modern fountain pen. (3)
4. What two types of reservoirs are commonly used by fountain pens? What is the purpose of the reservoir? (3)
5. What are the three primary filling principles now in common use for fountain pens? (3)
6. How does the lever fill or conventional filling mechanism work? (3)
7. How does the button filler operate? (3)
8. Explain the action of the pneumatic type filler. (4)
9. How does the diaphragm filling mechanism operate? (4)
10. Explain the operation of the plunger filler. (4)
11. What is the purpose of the section of a fountain pen? (4)
12. Explain how the fountain pen operates. (5)
13. What is the purpose of the cuts and fins on the feed? (5)
14. How is the air pressure between the outside and inside of the reservoir equalized? (5)
15. With what metals are nibs tipped to step up wearing quality? (6)
16. Compare the selling features of the gold versus the stainless metal nibs. (6)
17. What is the purpose of the pierce hole in the nib? (6)
18. What are the two variables in nib construction that must be considered in fitting the right nib to the person's writing needs and characteristics? (6)
19. What are the three parts of a standard fountain pen cap? (6)
20. What is the purpose of the inner cap? (6)
21. Why are there vent holes below the inner cap when used with screw-type sections? (6)
22. What keeps the cap on streamlined barrels? (6)
23. What purposes does the clip serve? (7)
24. What is a "military" clip? (7)
25. Has your appreciation of the pen as a scientific instrument been strengthened by this study? How?

# QUESTION LIST

## PART 2 PAGES 7-12

1. How does the dip pen differ from a fountain pen? How is it the same? (7)
2. Give some specific customers in your town who could use dip sets with chained pen.
3. What are the characteristics of a good dip set? (7)
4. What is meant by "Permanent" ink and in what instances should it be used? (8)
5. What is meant by "Washable" ink and in what instances should it be used? (8)
6. Give at least five characteristics of a good fountain pen ink. (8)
7. What are the favorite ink colors? What other colors do you carry in stock? (8)
8. Why is mixing inks poor economy? (8)
9. Explain the principle of the ball point pen. (9)
10. What are the two primary feeds for ball point ink? How do they operate? (9)
11. Why must the outside air be allowed to enter the capillary action cartridge? (9)
12. For what brands of ball points do you carry replaceable cartridges? Do you stock any types that are interchangeable with several brands of pens?
13. What are the three types of "turn" style mechanical pencils? How are they different? (10)
14. How does the "push" style or repeater pencil operate? (10)
15. What are the two standard thicknesses for mechanical pencil leads? (10)
16. What are the two common lengths of thin lead? How long is the thick lead? (10)
17. Which is the harder lead, 2B or 2H? 1½ or H? HB or F? (11)
18. What color lead would you recommend for blueprints or photostats? (11)
19. Give examples of customers for soft leads. Medium soft. Medium hard. Hard. (11)
20. Why should the average salesmen turn pen and pencil repairs over to the repair department? (11)
21. What is meant by the term 14-Karat gold? (12)
22. What is meant by "gold filled," or "rolled gold"? (12)
23. How must a gold filled part be described? Give an example. (12)
24. What is meant by "gold electroplated"? (12)
25. Explain the guarantee plans of the pens you sell.

# QUESTION LIST

## PART 3 PAGES 13-25

1. What are the three broad markets for writing instruments? (13)
2. Why does the average dealer carry merchandise for all markets when he makes more unit profit on the more expensive lines? (13)
3. How do you justify, from the customer satisfaction angle, selling him a higher priced pen when a less expensive one might write just as well? (13)
4. When are the high sales periods of the year for writing instruments? (13)
5. How would you suggest bringing up the sales for the other periods?
6. Give some examples of customers for the utility and price lines. (14)
7. Give some firms in your city who might be especially good prospects for imprinted mechanical pencils and ball points. (14, 15)
8. Give some examples of customers for the crayon type mechanical pencils. (14)
9. How does the ball point fit into the pen and pencil picture? (15)
10. Where is the use of a ball point pen particularly advantageous? (15)
11. Why are imprinted pencils so popular for advertising purposes? (15)
12. What types of writing instruments are used by the average firm? (16)
13. Explain ways in which you suggest increasing sales of combination sets to business men for gift purposes. (17)
14. Name at least five fraternal or social organizations that are prospects for engraved desk sets.
15. What is the procedure for selling supplies to your local schools?
16. What clubs and athletic organizations in your city might be prospects for imprinted pencils and ball points as a money-raising project?
17. List the six major steps in making a pen sale as given in this manual. (19)
18. What is meant by the "merchandise approach" to opening the sale? (19)
19. Why is it necessary to find out for whom the pen is being bought? What is your method for finding this out quickly? (19)
20. Why do salesmen prefer showing the complete set even though the pen alone was asked for? (20)
21. Explain the "which" principle of selling, giving the customer at least two choices at all times. Give examples of its use in selling pens. (20)
22. Which quality line do you prefer showing first where the customer has indicated no preference? Why? (20)
23. Give some points to watch during the demonstration. (21)
24. What is your procedure for being sure the point selection will satisfy the customer? (21)
25. In what ways can you increase your average pen sale? (24)